Fake News Lesson Ideas/Brainstorm

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1. Discuss
   1. How it is becoming more of a concern due to its possible effects on the election
   2. Define is it:
      1. Is it always false
      2. Can it be merely exaggerated facts
      3. What role does partisanship play in it
   3. For an actual definition, I would perhaps take some suggestions from the class
2. It has been around for a long time
   1. Show image of Paul Revere
      1. Thought provoking questions are on it
   2. Hand out the Yellow journalism doc
      1. Yellow journalism is the term assigned to questionable and obviously exaggerated news reports about the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana, Cuba.
         1. IT features sensationalized headlines and poorly resourced facts.
         2. Joseph Pulitzer’s New York World and William Randolph Hearst’s New York Journal were tight competition for readers
         3. The ship exploded from within due to an accumulation of coal dust yet the New York Journal (as evidenced by the example) presents it as if the Spanish blew it up with a marine mine or torpedo.
         4. Readers can compare the two articles, from the New York Journal and the New York Times which has a much more balanced description of events
      2. Yellow journalism while not a primary cause of the Spanish American war, probably contributed to the US declaring war.
3. The situation today
   1. Polarized climate presents a ripe condition for fake news to be spread
      1. Media is presented as liberal and constantly lying by some conservatives
   2. Social media present an easy way to view and then pass on news that is not verified, or fact based
4. Examples:
   1. Several sites such as
      1. <http://abcnews.com.co/>
      2. <http://www.infowars.com/>
   2. Recent “Pizzagate” scandal
      1. New York times article explains it from start to finish
         1. A fake news article drove a guy from North Carolina to come up to self-investigate and he discharged a weapon in the pizza shop
      2. Too long to use for the round table but good for students to read.
   3. A way to check
      1. <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>
   4. Printed stuff to use
      1. <http://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org/sites/default/files/GO-TenQuestionsForFakeNewsFINAL.pdf>
5. What challenges will you face when discussing it with a class?
   1. Political bias could be a hindrance, both from the teacher and the students
      1. Media is always perceived, probably correctly, as being liberal
         1. (careful with this item!!!!) Some Republicans may be happy to push the narrative that the media is pushing their lies because they follow a liberal agenda.
      2. Bring up the idea of the “echo chamber.” We always like to hear what reinforces what we already believe
         1. Do you hang out with a person who constantly disagrees with what you say or believe?
   2. Poor reading skills, reading fatigue will make this process difficult
      1. Verification of facts from multiple sources is often required
   3. Heavy use of social media
      1. Many get their news from social media sites which are not monitored for accuracy
         1. A good question would be…should it be monitored?
            1. Who is to determine what is right and wrong.